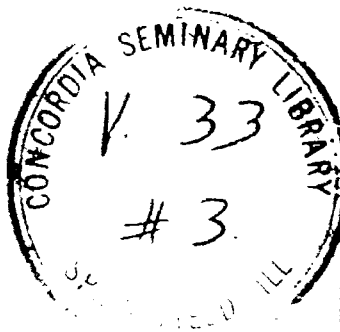


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Editorials

Commitment To The
Lutheran Confession

PETER BRUNNER

Reflections On A
European Trip

DAVID P. SCAER

A Place For Humility
In The Search For Unity

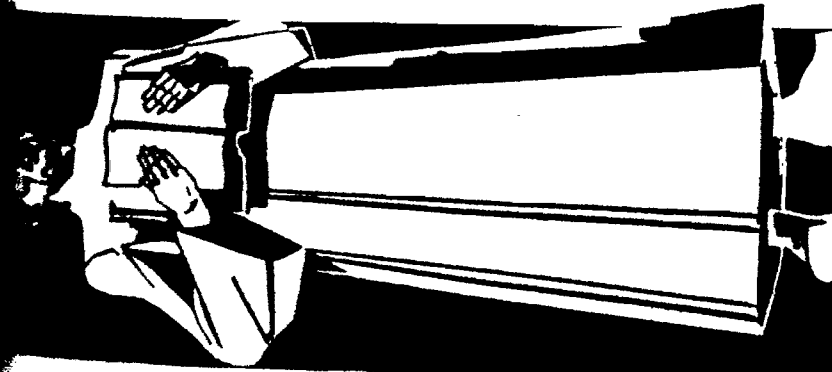
RICHARD J. SCHULTZ

Give Attention To Reading

HENRY J. EGGOLD

Theological Refractions

Book Reviews



the springfielder

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DECEMBER, 1969



Commitment to The Lutheran Confession—What Does It Mean Today?

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Editor's Note: Professor Peter Brunner, professor emeritus of dogmatical theology at the University of Heidelberg in Germany, needs no introduction. He has served on the theological commission of the Lutheran World Federation and the board of directors for its Institute on Ecumenical Research. Recently Concordia Publishing House published his IN JESUS NAME. The status of the Lutheran Confessions in the Lutheran Churches is becoming somewhat problematic in the face of recent biblical studies. The exegetical freedom permitted by the Confessions in regard to individual pericopes is frequently interpreted to mean that the Lutheran exegete has total exegetical freedom, as long as he holds to the Lutheran Confessions. This attitude has resulted either in treating the Confessions merely as historical documents belonging to the Lutheran tradition or in their canonization, i.e., they are true simply because of themselves. Both of these stances overlook that the position taken by the Confessions themselves in that they purport to be expositions of the Bible on certain points. This crisis in Lutheran theology concerning its confessions is well described by a Lutheran Church in America clergyman, Dr. Horace Hummel, professor of Old Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology, in the October, 1969 issue of the LUTHERAN FORUM, in an article entitled "No other Gospel." In the following article Professor Brunner provides some basic answers to questions which have been legitimately raised by Dr. Hummel. In conjunction with reading Professor Brunner's article, the reader is also directed to Dr. Hummel's excellent article in the LUTHERAN FORUM. A following issue will contain several reactions, one which I have contributed. The following article is translated by Vicar Wilhelm Torgerson and prepared for publication by Mr. Kenneth Taglauer. It appears by consent of Professor Brunner and by permission of Lutherisches Verlagshaus in Berlin.

D.P.S.

IN THE PAST 250 years the Lutheran Church has not been able to overcome the distress into which the history of theology has led her. By and large she has not yet recognized the depth of this distress. All talk of commitment to confession is senseless when the Holy Scriptures have been lost as the concrete judge over all proclamation

and doctrine. Confession presupposes the Scriptures, that is, the Scriptures as a communicating authority, not merely as a historical factor! This prerequisite has come to be problematic for many pastors, theologians and non-theologians. Therefore confessional commitment itself has come to be problematic. Commitment to the Lutheran confession includes today first of all recovering the prerequisite of every confessional commitment—the concrete authority of the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament for the content of the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.

We can also formulate this prerequisite of every confessional commitment in this manner: The churches, the congregations, their shepherds and teachers hear with great accord from the canonical Scriptures of the Bible the voice of the Good Shepherd in the voice of his messengers. Becoming fully aware of the communicating Bible, hearing the unanimously harmonious voices of the Scriptural witnesses, the self-unveiling of God's Word in the Scriptures through the work of the Holy Ghost, this is the prerequisite for the Scriptures exercising their office of judge over all teachers and doctrine in the Church. If it is not given to congregations, their shepherds and teachers to hear from the totality of the Holy Scriptures—and not perhaps in an abbreviated Paul only—the saving word of the Gospel with one great harmony, then the existence of the Church itself is in danger. Then the confessing word of the Church has come to be impossible, the commitment to a confession has become a mere formal-legalistic matter. If the Scriptures no longer speak out of their canonical core also in their canonical breadth to the congregations, their shepherds and teachers as the living Word of God, then any commitment to any confession is inwardly undermined and has come to be meaningless.

The Lutheran Confession commits congregations, their shepherds and teachers exclusively to the apostolic Gospel. Therefore the Lutheran Confession contains no truths that rest in or consist of themselves, but all valid expositions it sets forth receive their validity solely from the apostolic Gospel. Moreover, it is part of the unshakable foundations of Luther's Reformation that the Church cannot of its own accord establish articles of faith. What is not established by God's revelation in God's Word as the content of faith can never, according to Lutheran confession, become content of a dogma. By committing the Church exclusively to the apostolic Gospel, the Lutheran confession frees the Church from the binding power of all teachings not based in God's Word.

The content of the apostolic Gospel includes an immediate back-reference to the sacred writings of Israel. The apostolic Gospel cannot be proclaimed properly if such a back-reference to the Old Testament does not take place. How this back-reference is to be concretely achieved and what its dogmatic relevance is cannot be fully expounded here. We must here be satisfied with the conclusion that in the apostolic Gospel as such a peculiar dogmatic authority of the Old Testament for just this Gospel is attested. The manner in which

Israel's sacred writings effect their authority in the Church of Jesus Christ is fundamentally different from the authority which the Synagogue ascribed to these writings. But the authority of these writings is not annulled by the Gospel, but rather it is taken into the Gospel and its character is defined through the Gospel. Even if the theological forms, in which we ought to reflect the apostolic message back to the Old Testament, cannot be identical, in our judgment, to the forms employed by the New Testament writings, yet the substance intended by these forms must be retained even today. The back-reference to the Old Testament that the apostolic Gospel itself includes puts the Christ-Event into the very real history of God's saving acts. This history commences with the creation in the beginning, receives a decisive turn toward a messianic fulfillment with the election of Israel, and looks toward completion in a Day of the Lord. The Messiahship of Jesus dare never be substituted for His Lordship. That is the most profound reason for that back-reference to the Old Testament so characteristic of the Gospel and also for the peculiar authority of the Old Testament in the Church of Jesus Christ as defined by the Gospel itself. Therefore the apostolic Gospel cannot be preserved in its apostolicity if its ties to the Old Testament as Sacred Scriptures—ties defined by the Gospel and characteristic of it—are abandoned.

The apostolic Gospel is given to us in the New Testament writings. This sentence seems to be self-evident. Yet in truth it is probably more difficult to provide for it a basis than for the authority of the Old Testament. The apostolic Gospel is not written letter, but living Word. The apostolic Gospel is the kerygmatic witness of a clearly limited group of persons. Apostles, in the dogmatic sense of the word, are eyewitnesses of the resurrected Lord, who were commissioned by the resurrected Lord Himself, at His Easter appearance, to be His witnesses. Paul, who only saw the resurrected Lord after Pentecost and was then sent by Him, had to fight for the recognition of his apostolic office. The Church has at all times recognized the apostolate of Paul. Beside Paul, there are eleven or twelve, representing an eschatological institution, that are apostles at the same time. Whether other disciples also saw the Resurrected One and were thus commissioned to be His messengers we do not know. Apostolic Gospel means that message of salvation and that doctrine of salvation which those authorized eyewitnesses uttered.

When we, together with the *Formula of Concord*, call the New Testament writings apostolic Scriptures, we are claiming that these writings take for us the place of the verbal apostolic Gospel. With what justification do we claim this? What kind of claim is this? Certainly this claim is not purely historical judgment, even though the historical circumstances play a role in this judgment. Is not the conviction that the apostolic Gospel is given to us in the New Testament writings basic to the confession of the Church? From what source do we today provide a basis for the dogmatic authority of the New Testament part of the Holy Scriptures? In fact, are theologians today still

able to speak of Holy Scriptures "which alone are the true guide, according to which all teachers and doctrine are to be judged and decided?" (FC SD 3) Does the Lutheran Church still have a judge over teachers and doctrine in its midst? In view of the New Testament this question seems to me especially pressing. Commitment to the Lutheran confession, particularly today, means fundamentally the confession to the New Testament as a collection of such writings in which the apostolic Gospel is given to us as the sole, ultimately decisive norm for the passing on of this Gospel, which proceeded from the mouths of the commissioned eyewitnesses of the Resurrected One.

We dare not close our eyes to the fact, that in our Church, too, in the theology taught in our churches, concerning the concrete authority of the Holy Scriptures has by and large crumbled away. When the question is raised, "What content sermon and instruction must have in the Church in order to be the saving word of the Gospel?", other judges beside the Scriptures or even in circumvention of the Scriptures are not seldom called upon for a decision. And we here assume that even the fundamental conviction is not challenged, that the salvation of man before God is freely given by God to man through Word and Sacrament. To find the content of the Gospel proclamation, some, for instance, call upon a certain religious experience, upon a certain understanding of existence, upon a modernistic version of the *justificatio impiorum*, upon a reduction-to-a-minimum of the Gospel given in the Scriptures to an arbitrary establishment of "*was Christum treibet*." The result of this is that not seldom, in the name of so-called objective criticism, large parts of the New Testament have been robbed of their authority for the proclamation and doctrine of the Church, as for example the Gospel according to Luke, the Acts of the Apostles of Luke, the so-called Deutero-Paulines and the Pastoral Letters. For some the doctrinal content of these writings already passes for a sign of the Church's fall into Proto-Catholicism. In the opinion of many the place of variety in the New Testament witness is taken by contradictory contrast. Even if we disregard that dim margin of the New Testament canon, the *Antilegomena*, the deutero-canonical writings, and only consider the part of the canon which the Lutheran Reformation, too, did not dispute, even there people are unable to behold the unity of the New Testament witness in its diversity and its diversity in its unity. Rather they see in the core of the canon itself a mutually exclusive contrariness. But if the New Testament no longer harmonizes, if in the canonical writings of the New Testament a consensus is no longer heard regarding the Gospel that is to be proclaimed, then a confessional commitment has become fundamentally impossible. In the same measure that the Church loses the concrete authority of the Holy Scriptures, she also loses a binding consensus in regard to the content of the Gospel proclamation. The place of commitment to confession is taken by commitment to this or that theological opinion, which now itself must necessarily appear with the exclusive authority of a dogma. Where the authority of the

Scriptures is lost, the *hairesis* of a school of thought takes the place of the *confessio* of the Church.

Commitment to the Lutheran confession means today first of all recognizing the profound spiritual distress of our churches. It consists in this, that the communicating Scriptures, the judging Scriptures, the Scriptures as only rule and guide for proclamation and doctrine have largely been lost. Commitment to the Lutheran confession will have to include today the petition for the coming of the Spirit, who will again enable us to hear the apostolic voice and in it the apostolic authority of the New Testament linked to the Old Testament.

When this happens, and to the extent that it does happen, it will become clear to us that commitment to the Lutheran confession today, too, means commitment to the confession of the primitive Church. To single out just one, though decisive point: It is impossible to witness to a sinner about the justification of the sinner, if Jesus of Nazareth is not substantially God. In this acknowledgment I am sure we may recognize the core of the primitive Church confessions—that Jesus is true God, born of the Father before time, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary. But one cannot confess the *homoousios* of the Nicene Creed without the doctrine of the Trinity of the Athanasian Creed. Am I saying too much when I say our position in regard to the confession of the primitive Church decides not only whether we know ourselves in truth committed to the Lutheran confession, but also at the same time it is decided whether we preserve the apostolic Gospel in our midst. Pointing to the “results of New Testament exegesis” cannot shake this sentence in any way. The facts involved here are exegetically quite clear. No one denies that the Pauline and Johannine writings and other New Testament writings for a large part advocate a Christology of pre-existence. Compared with the fathers of the Reformation, we have become, of course, more clever in the meantime through historical-critical research. We are able to extricate the finest shades of meaning between the understanding of pre-existence in the genuine letters of Paul, and the Deutero-Paulines and the Gospel of John. With virtuosity we are able to point out the conceptual-historical presuppositions, the *religionsgeschichtliche* interrelations of this conceptuality. But this question still looms impartially over all exegesis: Is the apostolic, canonical attestation to Christ in John 1, Phil. 2 and Hebrews still valid? Is that attestation concerning the incarnation of the Son of God, supported by Luther and the Lutheran confession and by the mainstream of Reformed confessional writings, true for today? Or, with carefully clever exegesis can we reduce the incarnation to a concept of personal imagination that only allows as much importance as our personal theologies will permit?

It is undeniable that Matthew and Luke witness that Jesus was not born of male seed, but was conceived of the Holy Ghost and therefore born of the virgin Mary. In view of this declaration of the Gospel there is no serious exegetical problem. But to which theologian

does this declaration of the evangelists still speak as apostolic witness to Christ? For confessing the virgin birth of Jesus Christ cannot be a matter of a *sacrificium intellectus*, but solely a matter of Spirit-infused insight into the Gospel content of this declaration, a matter of Spirit-infused recognition of the nature of the sign set by God for this circumstance. Do we see that we never have the sign without the very matter that is the sign?

Or shall I point to the resurrection of Jesus, which included his corporeality and changed it, or to the externality of His Easter appearances, that in the New Testament are never understood as pneumatic visions? Or shall I point to the coming apocalyptic end of the world and return of Jesus to judge the living and the dead? Each time the exegetical facts are unequivocal, but their adoption in modern theology, their affirmation as dogmatically valid pronouncements are equally denied—again a sign for the extent to which the communicating Scriptures, the judging Scriptures, the Scriptures as concrete norm have been lost. It is also a sign of what commitment to the Lutheran confession would mean today, if this commitment were actually what it by nature is: commitment to the apostolic witness to Christ in the Holy Scriptures.

Commitment to the Lutheran confession means today the recognition, that the reception by the Reformation of the dogmas of the primitive Church was precisely not doing merely half a job, an action quite understandable from historical reasons, but rather it necessarily belongs to the cause of the Gospel itself. Commitment to the Lutheran confession means today the admission, that the reality of forgiveness is questioned to the very core if Jesus is not truly and substantially God, eternal Son of the Father, of one substance with the Father, or if he is not truly and substantially man, born of the virgin Mary, of the same substance with us men, only without sin. Commitment to the Lutheran confession means today the obligation to point out the necessary relation between the content of the apostolic Gospel and the dogma of the primitive Church.

Let me now go on to the specifically reformatory content of the Lutheran confession. In no instance does the Lutheran confession want to establish a new dogma. In fact, the Church cannot set any articles of faith except to witness to those contents of faith already set in the writings of the prophets and apostles by God's revelation. But in view of this witness to the Biblical content of the faith by the Church, "new" teachings are from the start suspect to the Lutheran confession. The Gospel did not disappear in the world around the year 120 and only re-appeared at Wittenberg in the years from 1516 to 1521. The Gospel has had its witnesses to truth at all times among diverse hay, straw and chaff in the dear fathers, even in the Roman Church, as the *Augsburg Confession* expressly assures at the end of the first part after Article XXI. According to the Lutheran confessions inventive novelty of a doctrine in no wise speaks for its scripturality, but rather its ecumenical foundation does. Sometimes it is downright

alarming for us to see how intent Luther was not to establish a teaching that with view to the history of dogma could have been branded "new." To be sure, for his doctrine of the eucharistic real presence of the body and blood of Christ, for instance, his understanding of the respective New Testament reference was decisive. But he was comforted in this by the fact, that he knew himself to be at one with the fathers in this matter. How unabashedly Melancthon in *Apologia* X points to the canon on the mass in the Eastern Church—in *quo aperte orat sacerdos, ut mutato pane ipsum corpus Christi fiat*. The Lutheran confession is in one aspect a peaceful confession, a peace seeking confession, a confession that seeks the brethren, a confession formulated in ecumenical responsibility and in this sense catholic. Commitment to the Lutheran confession must for us today include this responsibility to bring out the importance of an ecumenical breadth in our theology that searches for witnesses to the Gospel also in patristics, in the Eastern Church, too, and even in the Roman Church, instead of paying homage to a limited, narrow devotion to Luther, which confines itself in the main to a one-sided selection from the so-called "young Luther."

Precisely this ecumenical foundation of the Lutheran confession has as a result its polemic relentlessness. The Lutheran NO to the papal Church has as its prerequisite the YES to the catholic Church, which coincides with the YES to the apostolic Gospel. In this lies the strength for its rejection of the papal Church. Commitment to the Lutheran confession today, after Vatican I, after the dogmatisation of *assumptio Mariae virginis*, means the obligation to repeat this NO to the papal Church from the same foundation. Why is the Protestant polemic against Rome often so without effect, so weak, so little convincing? Because it largely lacks the prerequisite with which the Lutheran confession has spoken its NO to Rome! Whoever says NO to the papal Church because he takes out of the Gospel, which is given in the Scriptures and passed on in the *ecclesia catholica*, one solitary point and already thereby necessarily distorts it and over and above that mutilates it, does not attack the papal Church at all; his polemic does not find its goal. It is rather an indirect strengthening of the papal Church. Only where in the name of the apostolic and catholic Church with the power of the scriptural Gospel the NO against Rome is spoken is Rome really hit. All else is wasting ammunition that can drive serious Christians right into the arms of Rome.

The commitment to the apostolic Gospel and the foundation in the universal Christian Church that is given therein forces the Lutheran confessions also into an inter-Protestant polemic against enthusiasts and sacramentarians. This NO, too, is not merely a matter of maintaining a perhaps still mediævally shackled, not wholly ripened theological opinion, but rather it is a matter of the existence of the catholic Church, which as such is the Church of the apostolic Gospel. There can be only one reason for the Lutheran Church to revise the stand of her confession on this point: if the apostolic witness of the

Holy Scriptures, in regard to the function of the *verbum externum* and in regard to the nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper, should teach us today something different from what the fathers of the Lutheran confession perceived in it, then, of course, we would have to drop the *damnant* of CA V and the *improbant* of CA X.

In answering the questions before us this recognition is fundamental, that both as far as the Lutheran confession and we are concerned, the witness of the Scriptures takes, with the same validity, the place of the primitive apostolic witness. If we look to the understanding of the Lord's Supper of Paul in I Cor. 10 and 11 and that of the evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke, it is made very clear, that for Paul as for Mark—to name here only the oldest witnesses—the consecrated bread and the consecrated cup are the bearers of the body and blood of Christ. The exegetical difficulty of this question sets in when it is a matter of interpreting the history of tradition that stands behind the New Testament texts on the Lord's Supper. We have no reason to protest against the attempt to clarify this history of tradition. But, we have every reason to protest against the attempt to play off this more or less hypothetically reconstructed history of tradition against the witness to the Lord's Supper of Paul and the evangelists. This dogmatizing historism in New Testament exegesis signifies basically nothing but the denial of the ever-active Christ-Pneuma in the history of tradition. This dogmatizing historism basically signifies nothing but the denial of the fundamental thesis on which the catholic and apostolic Church stands and falls, namely that to the concrete nature of the Scriptural witness itself, and not to a postulated state of tradition lying behind it, belongs the concrete apostolic authority according to which all teachers and doctrine in the Church ought to be judged. But if we look to the concrete Scriptural witness itself, there is every reason to resist in the name of the catholic and apostolic Church any softening of the teaching confessed by the fathers in CA V and CA X.

The situation regarding the doctrine of predestination in the Reformed confessional writings is no different. There are many points from which we could raise objections against them. The decisive point to me, however, seems to be the universal significance for salvation of the work of Christ. If the doctrine of predestination of the *Gallicana* and its kindred writings is valid, then Christ did not die for all men, but rather only for one part of humanity, for those predestined from eternity. From its standpoint the *Helvetic Formula of Consensus* has, therefore, justly dogmatized this terrible sentence: Christ, because of the Father's eternal decree, was made guarantor of the New Covenant only for the predestined and also from His own intention took bitter death upon Himself only for them—and not for all men that are born.

And also in the question of the presence of Jesus with His Church compels us to follow the decision of the fathers of our Lutheran confession. It is part of the soteriological core of the very

Gospel that we proclaim, that Christ is truly with His people, "not alone according to His divinity, but also according to and with His adopted human nature, according to which He is our brother and we are flesh of His flesh." (FC SD VIII, 78) The declaration which the Heidelberg Catechism makes on this point in its famous Question 47 is not only a "theological accident of trade" (Karl Barth), but it attacks the Gospel itself. Behind it stands a theological conception that is of decisive importance for the whole understanding of Church and Spirit, of Word and Sacrament. Again the exegetical facts are clear: He, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, He, who has been exalted above all heavens and yet fills all in all, is precisely the man Jesus who has been made Lord of all powers.

Also on the doctrine of church order the recognition of the Lutheran confession has proven valid. In the Church only one office has been divinely instituted, that office, which administers the means of grace. All else in the line of ecclesiastical order ought only to serve this office and ought to be regulated according to the aspects of expediency and propriety in the liberty of the believers on the basis of their reason. In the name of the liberty to which Christ has freed us we ought to resist the expansion of what is valid for the order of the Church *de iure divino* which the Reformed confessional writings demand.

Commitment to the Lutheran confession gives to the Lutheran Church a very definite, clear directive regarding their attitude within the ecumenical movement. The Lutheran Churches cannot and must not allow that the ecumenical movement results in a Protestant Synthesis, where a middle line between the teachings of the Baptists, the Methodists, the Calvinists and the Lutherans, coupled with acceptance of the episcopal constitution of the Anglicans, forms the unifying principle under whose protecting roof all can gather, without clarity and agreement having been achieved concerning the truth of the Gospel. It is not a matter of vindicating the Lutheran Confessions of the 16th century at all costs in the present ecumenical discussion, but it is a matter of vindicating the apostolic Gospel given in the Scriptures.

Up to this point we have looked to the outside. But above all we must sweep in front of our own door. What does commitment to the Lutheran confession mean for the inner life of the Lutheran Churches themselves? I shall recall once more what commitment to the Lutheran confession does not mean: it is not a *sacrificium intellectus*, it is not a servile submitting to a doctrinal law as under the rod of a tyrannical driver, it is not a legalistic handling of a letter of the law, nor a formal-legalistic act without importance for the content of doctrine and proclamation. Rather commitment to the Lutheran confession is a gift which cannot be forced on one who has not already received it from elsewhere. Commitment to the Lutheran confession is a gift of the Holy Ghost which no man has at his disposal on his own. Commitment to the Lutheran confession is the pneumatic

insight into the harmony between that Gospel that emanates from the Scriptures as living Word and those confessional statements of our fathers. Commitment to the Lutheran confession is an act of spiritual liberty for which only the Gospel heard in the Spirit can free us.

When such commitment to the Lutheran confession becomes reality, then, precisely at that point, we will see that we cannot make do with a mere reciting of the formulations of the fathers. Once it is really discerned that the apostolic Gospel has fashioned for itself a legitimate source of expression in the Lutheran confession and particularly in its theologically disputed parts, then this confession, as *norma normata*, will exercise concrete authority in the Church. For then the apostolic Gospel itself exercises its concrete authority through this confession. The authority of the apostolic Gospel, however, is always a very real one, it demands decision. One cannot withdraw from it into a state of amiable non-obligation. Should the miracle occur that in a Lutheran Church that pneumatic commitment to the Lutheran confession becomes reality, then at the same time a great movement of repentance will set in regarding doctrine and preaching and sacramental administration. Spirit-effected commitment to the Lutheran confession will overcome the paralysis which historicism for about 200 years has brought to theology and preaching. Where commitment to the Lutheran confession takes place in the sense indicated one cannot pretend that since 1700 nothing happened in the history of theology and learning. Commitment to the Lutheran confession demands today not a repetitive, formalistic recitation of the statements of the fathers, but rather their binding, actualizing interpretation and application. If we today want to speak of genuine commitment to the Lutheran confession, then we are obliged to express in the current situation of this year just what we confess when confessing with the fathers. Since the year 1580, the Lutheran Church has no longer dared to explain and reiterate, under the guidance of the Word of God and in a manner binding on all congregations, shepherds and teachers, several articles of the *Augsburg Confession*, about which disputes have arisen among several theologians. The Church would surely have had more than ample reason to do so. Why did she remain silent? Dare she keep silence any longer? Between 1580 and today stand the collapse of old-Protestant Orthodoxy, of the Enlightenment, of Idealism, of Historism, of Existentialism, which all left their traces in the preaching of the Church to this very day. At the place in history where we stand today we expect of the ordained a YES to the teachings of the Lutheran confession. But without telling him beforehand just what obligating content this YES has at this place in history today, we either demand too much of him, or we are giving him to understand that with his YES each ordained may think what he wants, since no one is any longer in the position to say authoritatively just what this YES includes in the line of very real content. If the Lutheran Church does not dare, at least regarding a few central items of the Gospel, to express in a binding

manner in her own words, what is already binding witness of the apostolic Gospel on the many printed pages of her confession, then she denies the Spirit of God, who now, today, here, in our historical situation, demands loyalty to the apostolic Gospel together with its actualizing interpretation. Commitment to the Lutheran confession means therefore today a common tabulation of a summary of the Lutheran confessional writings, which at the same time applies the Biblical insights of the fathers to our situation and which witnesses to and preserves the apostolic Gospel against the effective heretical errors of our present time.

Does this challenge demand too much of us? What will our synods, our bishops and church administrations say to this challenge? Will they not say: "That is too touchy a subject. We cannot bring that up." The attempt to make several articles of the *Augsburg Confession* applicable to our theological and church situation by means of a binding reiteration and explanation will conjure up one crisis after another. Considering the nature of our churches such an attempt would be bound to fail from the start. We therefore have to put up with the dogmatic twilight that hovers over our churches until further notice. Only in this twilight we can live together."

Should they, who speak in this manner, be right? Then only the one thing remains: our sigh from the depths:

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
et emitte caelitus
lucis tuae radium.

Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium . . .

Lava quod est sordidum,
riga quod est aridum,
sana quod est saucium.